

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

GUILLERMO GUTIERREZ,  
Plaintiff,

v.

TRANSAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE,  
Defendant.

No. 2:23-cv-02514 KJM AC

ORDER

This case was removed from Stanislaus County Superior Court on November 1, 2023. ECF No. 1. It is before the undersigned because plaintiff is appearing in pro se. Local Rule 302(c)(21). Good cause appearing, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

1. A Status (Pretrial Scheduling) Conference is set for March 6, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom before the undersigned. All parties shall appear by counsel or in person if acting without counsel.
2. Not later than fourteen (14) days prior to the Status Conference, the parties shall file status reports addressing the following matters:
  - a. Service of process;
  - b. Possible joinder of additional parties;
  - c. Any expected or desired amendment of the pleadings;
  - d. Jurisdiction and venue;

- e. Anticipated motions and their scheduling;
- f. The report required by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26 outlining the proposed discovery plan and its scheduling, including disclosure of expert witnesses;
- g. Future proceedings, including setting appropriate cut-off dates for discovery and law and motion, and the scheduling of a pretrial conference and trial;
- h. Special procedures, if any;
- i. Estimated trial time;
- j. Modification of standard pretrial procedures specified by the rules due to the simplicity or complexity of the proceedings;
- k. Whether the case is related to any other cases, including bankruptcy;
- l. Whether a settlement conference should be scheduled;
- m. Whether the parties will stipulate to the magistrate judge assigned to this matter acting as settlement judge and waiving disqualification by virtue of her so acting, or whether they prefer to have a settlement conference before another judge;
- n. Any other matters that may add to the just and expeditious disposition of this matter.

3. The parties are informed that they may elect to participate in the court's Voluntary Dispute Resolution Program ("VDRP") by contacting the court's VDRP administrator, Sujean Park, at (916) 930-4278 or SPark@caed.uscourts.gov.<sup>1</sup> The parties shall carefully review and comply with Local Rule 271, which outlines the specifications and requirements of the VDRP. **The parties are directed to meet and confer regarding possible VDRP participation, and contact Ms. Park to make the necessary arrangements if both parties agree that participation may be beneficial, within 45**

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<sup>1</sup> The resources of the VDRP program are limited, and the parties are expected to make good faith efforts to timely and fully exhaust informal settlement efforts prior to initiating participation in the VDRP. The court will look with disfavor upon parties stalling or failing to participate in initial informal discussions, prompting potentially unnecessary participation in the VDRP and straining the program's resources.

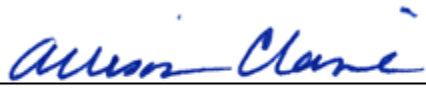
**days of this order.** If the parties agree to participate in VDRP the status conference will be vacated, to be reset if the case fails to settle.

4. The parties are also informed that they may, if all consent, have this case tried by a United States Magistrate Judge while preserving their right to appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. See 28 U.S.C. § 636(c). The form for consent to trial by a magistrate judge is attached. Consent forms should be returned to the Clerk of the Court within 30 days of this order.

5. The Clerk of the Court is directed to provide copies of the “Consent to Proceed Before United States Magistrate Judge” with this order.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: November 2, 2023

  
ALLISON CLAIRE  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE